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MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT: Status of Experiment in Competitive Analysis

1. The mandate of the three "B" teams was to take an independent look at Soviet strategic objectives, Soviet ICBM accuracy, and Soviet low altitude air defense capabilities, to determine whether Soviet goals are in fact more ambitious and their capabilities in two selected weapons areas more advanced -- and thus, by implication, presenting a more serious threat to US security -- than the case being reflected by the authors of National Intelligence Estimate 11-3/8-76, "Soviet Forces for Intercontinental Conflict."

2. Members of the "B" teams were recruited from among senior political and military analysts experienced in Soviet affairs, based on the guidance of the Estimates Evaluation Committee of the President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board. For various personal and professional reasons, however, some of those experts asked to participate could not do so.

3. In each of the three topic areas the teams were given access to the same data as that available to the intelligence community drafters of the NIE. While it is foreseen that the "B" teams will argue a more threatening view of the USSR than the NIE drafters will, each "B" team has been advised not to feel obligated to force the evidence in support of specific conclusions just because they were being asked to examine alternative hypotheses to those of the NIE.

4. All three "B" teams have been in operation for several weeks. The status of their work is as follows:

-- ICBM accuracy: The draft for exchange with the "A" team is being typed in final form and will be forwarded to Washington via officer courier on 6 October.

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- Low altitude air defense: The draft for exchange will also be forwarded to the "A" team during the week of 4 October.
- Soviet strategic objectives: Due to illness and hospitalization of the team leader, this draft will be delayed until the week of 12 October.

5. The "A" team schedule is essentially comparable. On the first two of the above topics the "A" and "B" drafts will be ready within a few days of each other. Because of the unavoidable delay in the "B" team draft on the third topic, it will be ready for exchange about a week or ten days after the "A" team draft is available. After the teams have had the opportunity to review each other's drafts, meetings will be scheduled to permit each team to defend its thesis -- where substantial differences exist -- but there will be no external pressures for altering the "B" teams' positions.

6. The present schedule calls for the National Foreign Intelligence Board to consider a final draft of NIE 11-3/8-76 -- with both "A" and "B" team drafts and comments -- sometime in November, and it does not appear that the "B" team experiment will create any substantial delays in that schedule.

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